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CENTRAL FAX CENTER<sup>A829</sup>

JUN 10 2009

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing below of the claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (allowed): A method for combustion of a fuel with an oxidant in a heating furnace, wherein the fuel and the oxidant are delivered to a burner head, said method comprising: a first step of emitting fuel and oxidant from the burner head in close proximity to each other, so that combustion occurs adjacent to the burner head and for a time until a temperature that exceeds a spontaneous combustion temperature of the fuel is reached within the furnace; and a second method step of thereafter emitting the fuel and the oxidant from the burner head at a mutual distance apart, so that combustion occurs at a point spaced from and outwardly of the burner head at a distance of at least a diameter of the burner head, wherein the fuel is emitted from a fuel nozzle in the burner head, and wherein the oxidant is a gaseous oxidant that has an oxygen content of at least about 80% and is delivered at an overpressure of at least 2 bar and is only emitted through oxidant outlet openings located on a side of and spaced from the fuel nozzle at a distance that exceeds half the diameter of the burner head.

Claim 2 (allowed): A method according to claim 1, wherein in the first step the fuel is emitted from a fuel nozzle in the burner head, and the oxidant is emitted concentrically around said fuel nozzle.

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Claim 3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (allowed): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using oil as the fuel.

Claim 8 (allowed): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using at least one of natural gas and propane as the fuel.

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (canceled)

Claim 12 (canceled)